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DECEMBER 1961

Let the Christ-Child Grow Up!

by *Arnold Rakow, Ruish*

Every year we decorate the Christmas tree, sing carols, give gifts, have parties, send cards, and shout "Happy Christmas"! And so we should. It is Jesus' birthday.

In the church we hear the welcome invitation: "Let us now worship the Christ-Child!" However, we might ask ourselves, in the midst of our celebrations, what will happen when Christmas is over.

Something *did* happen after the first Christmas: "the Child grew", states the Record.

We love babies; we "adore" them; many mothers don't want to see them grow up. Too many people don't let the Christ-Child grow up either. It is so easy, so heart-warming, so sentimental to adore the Christ-Child. But a Christmas-faith and a Christ-Child worship is not enough.

We must *let the Child grow*.

Not that we wish to disparage the observance of Christmas. At Christmastide we commemorate God's first fulfilment of the pledge to send a Saviour. If the Son of God had not "become flesh and dwelt among us", we would have no Emmanuel—"God with us". So rejoice at Christmas time!

But He can do little for us if our worship is such as keeps Him "wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger".

Jesus never turned our attention to His birth in a stable. Nor did his mother Mary, treasure Him primarily as the Child who was so sweet to cuddle, to love and to do little favours for. She let him grow up: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour". The shepherds also came to find their "Saviour, who is Christ the Lord". The wise men came to worship their King.

To become sentimental about the poor little Baby in the crude manger, is not worship—this is making God our "pet" as though He were dependent upon our love and sympathy. Such sentiment does not last beyond Christmas because it does not satisfy our dire need.

However, when we, like Mary, the shepherds and the wise men, let the Child grow, be about His Father's business and *become our mighty Champion*—saving us from the hell of our sin by sacrificing His life for us, conquering death for us by His resurrection, opening heaven for us, then we become dependent upon His love. By His great love shown to us, He is born in our hearts and lives there, inspiring us to worship Him forever.

What is worship?

How do we use the word in secular life? "They *worship* each other", we say of a young couple who live for each other's love. We usually reserve the word "worship" for our attitude toward a person who is everything to us, upon whom

feel completely dependent, without Him we wouldn't wish to live. That is a bad definition of the attitude of those who worship Christ.

The Bible uses the term "bride" to describe our relationship to Christ. St. Paul writes: "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." 2 Cor. 11 :2. John sees the Church "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Rev. 21 :2.

By this we understand worship as the fulfilling experience of unity, fellowship, communion, with Christ.

Often it is said that a believer worships Christ by everything that he does. This is true—the whole life of a believer is a continual worship, just as the whole life of a wife (washing, ironing, cooking, etc.) is a loving expression of her relationship with her husband. But washing, ironing, and cooking do not make her a wife—she might be simply a servant. Likewise, a person does not necessarily express his unity with Christ by doing his God-given duty to his fellowman, or even serving in Christ's Kingdom—we might still be "unprofitable servants", simply doing our duty.

Therefore the most important activity of the Christian is worship. It is the basis of his relationship with Christ. Without it one cannot *belong* to Christ, or be His bride. Satan begins with exultation when he leads a person to think he is walking with Christ while failing to meet with Christ in His own appointed way—by Word and Sacrament. If we belong to Christ, we will desire to worship Him regularly and to make our worship experiences always more enjoyable.

The "bride and bridegroom" simile is only a shadow of the reality, fervency and constancy of Christian worship. From this point of view let us ask ourselves a few searching questions about our worship. Do I rejoice at every opportunity of going

to His House to visit Him? Do I yearn to hear Him speak to me in His Word? Am I carried away with pondering the great expressions of His love to me rehearsed in the liturgy? Is the Holy Communion a soul-shaking experience for me?

Does this self-examination indicate any room for improvement? A satisfactory worship life flows from our receiving God's complete Christmas gift—not just what meets the eye in the manger. What first meets the eye is just the wrapping, which looks the same as millions of other precious gifts of God; but none of the other babies were the gift of His own Son. "*God was in Christ*", 2 Cor. 5 :19.

Startling and important as His birth is to us, we will not stop at adoring the wrappings of God's gift.

God wants His Christmas gift to be unwrapped and used . . . He wants His Son to be taken out of the stable and put into the living room of our lives. We pray for this to happen in the words of the Christmas collect :

Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that the new birth of Thine only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free, who are held in the old bondage under the yoke of sin; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

1962 SYNOD RESOLUTIONS

All ELCE congregations, missions, boards and other eligible bodies are asked to give early consideration to resolutions which they intend to submit for debate to the 1962 Synod. Such resolutions must be in the hands of the Secretary, 42 Museum Street, London, W.C.1 not later than 31 January 1962.

Christmas

I heard a voice say quietly
So everyone could hear
That all this fuss at Christmas
Was more than he could bear.

There was that endless music
And all that Christmas cheer,
Which made a man so tired
He couldn't bear to hear.

Why all this fuss at Christmas,
When it is just the same
As all the other holidays
Except it has that name?

There's only endless buying
Of gifts and cards and meat;
All that all this gets you
Is bills you cannot meet.

"Oh, well," said he, "it's for the kids.
They do have so much fun,
When early Christmas morning
They to the tree do run."

"My wife likes Christmas, too," said
he,
"Because for her it means
That all her family comes to us,
Or so it always seems."

I asked him what he meant by this,
As we sat there on the bus.
Did he not see the precious things
That Christmas brings to us?

He said, "Oh, no! Not one of *them*!
Please, please, my friend," said he,
"Leave me alone, for all I want
Is only peace, you see!"

"It's peace you want?" said I.
"Well, that's what Christmas brings."
Then said he, "What say you?
What peace? With all these things!"

"But is Christmas such a bother?
It never is to us,
Because we worship God above
Who sent His Son to us.

"Let me now the story tell
Which makes our Christmas real.
It isn't only food and drink
That we at Christmas feel.

"It is a joy the like of which
We find no other time,
For on this day so long ago
God gave His Gift sublime.

"There were two little people
On their way to Bethlehem,
Two poor and lonely people,
But God had chosen them.

"The lady, Mary, was with child,
Expected any minute.
The man was Joseph, who
Was worried to the limit.

"They got there late
To find all places closed.
They went from door to door,
And there their question posed.

"They could not find a room
Where they could spend the night,
Until they found a stable
Which had to be just right.

"There, in the stable lonely,
The Child was born anon,
And Mary Him delivered,
God's true and only Son.

"She wrapped Him up, and carefully
She laid Him in the manger,
While all around in Bethlehem
No one knew this stranger.

"But far out in the hills around
Were shepherds near asleep,
Watching over all their flocks,
And counting all their sheep.

"To these dear men there suddenly
Appeared an angel bright,
Who brought them all the news
Of Christ, the Lord of Light.

Said they, 'Glory to God in heaven,
unto you is born
the city of David, a Saviour,
this happy morn'.

Then off they went to find in town
little infant stranger,
who really was the King of Peace,
in a humble manger.

"All very well", said he.
"But why the Christmas of today?
I find no link," he said,
"With the Babe who in the manger
lay."

"Yes, there is," said I,
"quickly as can be.
The Baby in the manger
is God's great Gift to me."

Now, when at Christmas time,
I give my gifts to men,
His Gift I remember,
God's Gift, He gave me then."

"And what of all that music
That goes and goes and goes?
Does this belong in Christmas,
Or is it just its throes?"

Listen to the words, my friend,
and you will plainly hear
at all these songs of Christmas
all of the Saviour dear."

"An answer you have given, friend,
To songs and gifts so dear,
But what of all the kinfolk
Who come here year by year?"

That has a meaning, too,
only you will look
to see the family gathered
God's great Holy Book.

They share with one another
the precious gift so rare,
that God on that first Christmas
has placed into their care.

This means that you, your wife and all
can share the only Jesus,
the greatest message to the world,
the wondrous gift to heal us."

"How do you, then, see peace in this?
All things are still the same!"
"The things of Christmas still are there,
But all are in His name."

"It is in Him that man can find
True peace beyond degree,
For He has come into the world
From sin to set it free."

"He did not come to make the fuss
That Christmas is today;
But He did come into the world
To take our sins away."

"But, how, my friend, is this to change
The trouble and the woe
That come to me at Christmas time,
Come here to me below?"

"If you would put the Saviour first
In all your Christmas joy,
Then all these things would take their
place
And they would bring you joy."

"It isn't that important
To have a great big do.
Important is at Christmastide
What Christ has done for you."

"Thank you, my friend, for you
Have helped me and my life.
Now please come home with me
And tell all to my wife."

"I cannot now, but do you go
And guide and lead your home
To know that Christmas is the time
When Christ the Lord is come."

He left me then, and as I sat
On that cold, dreary bus,
I wondered if that man at home
Would change and find, like us,

In Christmas Christ the Lord, and
Joy and peace and happiness,
Instead of only noise and debts
And all that he called useless.

I prayed for him and for his home,
And hoped that all the things
Would be for him all joy and peace
That Christ on Christmas brings.

THE LISTENER

FROM THE T

SUNDERLAND

St. Timothy's Adopts Loy Kin Kwok

Autumn, 1948, and the Communists were sweeping across China. As Nationalist troops were pushed farther and farther back, small groups of patriots tried to help stem the flow of the relentless 'red tide'. The one-time Chief Administrative Officer of Kwong Szi Province, who became the leader of one such group, had the misfortune to fall into enemy hands. At a public trial he was condemned to death, subsequently shot, and a very small boy was left fatherless.

Twelve years later, in far-off Sunderland, England, an appeal for help for refugees in British Hong-Kong was launched. Local churches were asked to "adopt" or sponsor individual refugee families. As a result, the "One Church — One Family" scheme came into operation early this year. Our own St. Timothy's Lutheran Church in Sunderland responded, and Loy Kin Kwok, that little fatherless boy of 12 years ago, became our protégé.

Sometime in 1949 he and his mother had managed to reach Hong Kong. There they were compelled to join the ranks of the destitute and the homeless who thronged the streets of Kowloon City. Eventually, a tiny wooden hut became their home and here, amid squalid, unsanitary surroundings, the child grew up.

In October, 1959, disaster struck again — the little wooden hut they called home was completely des-

troyed by fire and their few possessions were lost.

The boy is now 18 years old. Over the years his mother has tried desperately hard to give him some sort of schooling, and though he was very keen to continue his education, the poor financial situation made this impossible.

Our congregation at St. Timothy's agreed a year ago to finance him, and, in consequence, he has been able to enter the Kowloon Chamber of Commerce English College.

We thank God that we are able to help, even in this small way, someone who is much less fortunate than ourselves. How thankful we should be for a country like our own where God has blessed so richly.

By MISS ALMA COULT

PETTS WOOD

Weekly Hymn Practice

Under the guidance of an experienced organist and choirmaster, Mr. David Appelt, imported from year from Canada—Christ Church members gather every Friday evening at the parsonage to practice two new hymns per week and to improve their singing of the liturgy. Pastor John Sims hopes that regular hymn practice will lead to the formation of a choir.

CAMBRIDGE

All At It

They're all at it in Cambridge—helping Pastor Nagel getting his Ph.D. dissertation ready for submission to University authorities by the

TO THE TYNE

nd of December. Three are typing the 500-page work, and three are proof-reading—a ticklish job since the footnotes, sometimes half the age, are often in Latin and medieval German. Early in January Pastor Hagel will take his oral colloquy in which he will be examined in the field of his dissertation by a Cambridge University professor and by a professor from another university.

OREHAM WOOD

Every evening service at St. Pauls during the last three Sundays in Advent was a special service: 10 December, a candlelight carol service; 17 December, Confirmation of five young people; 24 December, children's Christmas programme. On Saturday, 9 December, Pastor Borgas began a new confirmation instruction class for six children.

CARDIFF

Mumps has invaded the Lutheran parsonage at Fairwater — father, mother, and eldest son have succumbed—yet there is still joy for the pastor. The weekly Thursday night film, which followed the 11-night Christian Film Festival at the beginning of November, continues to bring new people into the church and to weld them into a worshipping, working family. A new group of a dozen or more, who two months ago had no contact with the Lutheran church, helped to plan and to carry out the special Christmas programmes. Leading them during the

enforced absence of Pastor Marvin Brammeier and gaining valuable first-hand experience for his own future work in Scotland, is Mr. Warren Fanning.

TOTTENHAM

Thieves Break Through and Steal

Burglars forcibly entered Holy Trinity Lutheran Church on 7 November and made off with crucifix, candlesticks, vases, curtain rods, baptismal bowl, and the dossal curtain. Surprisingly, the communion ware was left, probably overlooked. Doors and locks were damaged in the church and hall, as each door was forced in the search for loot.

Emergencies beget extra effort. One member spent most of the next day away from business, putting things in order, repairing doors and locks, finding temporary replacements for the stolen articles. One woman worked all through the night and into the next day making new paraments so that the chancel would be beautiful again the next day for the Mission Festival to be attended by the Mayor of Tottenham.

PLYMOUTH

A Pigeon Pair

The search for a church site in south-west England's biggest city goes on, but in the meantime another Lutheran has been added to the small Plymouth family. On Sunday noon, 3 December, Mrs. Bruer gave birth to a boy, 6 lbs. 6 ozs. The Bruers now have a boy and a girl, or, as some would say, "a pigeon pair".

News from our churches

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD FOR ERIC SMITH

Lutheran Teachers College in Nebraska Cites ELCE Layman

Mr. E. F. R. Smith, Treasurer of the ELCE and Manager of its Lutheran Agencies, was honoured with the Distinguished Service Award by Concord Teachers College of Seward, Nebraska, U.S.A., at a special Convocation held on Tuesday, 28 November. The College has an enrolment of nearly 90 students in training for teaching positions in the 1,300 primary schools of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The choir from this college gave concerts in several ELCE churches in June 1961 while on their European tour.

The citation reads in part:

To our young and growing Evangelical Lutheran Church of England, God has given lay leaders of outstanding dedication, ability and vision, men who have proved themselves in the business world, devote their energies and talents to the cause of Christ's Kingdom. Mr. Eric Frederick Roy Smith is one of the first of such laymen. Long before he was employed by the Church to take over the London office of the Lutheran Hour, he was the driving force in the committee set up by our two London congregations to publicize and develop the British Lutheran Hour. In the years since, his deep conviction that the Gospel of Christ is the great need of the unchurched masses has played a large part in the development of the Lutheran Hour, Lutheran Information Service, Concordia Films, and Concordia Publishing House Ltd. Through these agencies, the Lutheran message is reaching millions in a land where the Lutheran Church is merely known by name. In this work which brings him into contact with Christians of every denomination, Mr. Smith has maintained a discerning balance between genuine ecumenical concern and complete loyalty to the confessional position of his own Church.

31 Days Across America

In the 31 days between his take-off from London Airport on 9 November and his touch-down again on 4 December, Mr. Smith visited Lutheran churches and



centres all across the United States, from New York to Los Angeles. The major purpose was a seven-day conference in St. Louis of European Lutheran Hour branch office managers to discuss audience building methods, promotion, and programming techniques. Attending the meeting from Europe with Mr. Smith were the Rev. Bernard Galicher, Paris pastor and manager of the French office, and the Rev. Hans-Lutz Poetsch, parish pastor and manager of the Bremen office in Germany. For all three men, it was their first visit to the United States.

Addressed 450 Laymen

At Fort Wayne, Indiana, the three European managers visited Concordia Senior College, participated in a tele-

on interview, and addressed 450 lay-
at a Luther-birthday dinner. At
paraiso, they toured the Lutheran
iversity and were among the 3,200
ple who attended the church service
the University Chapel. "We have
er experienced anything like that,"
said after communing in the service
which 1,000 received the Sacrament.

On their way to the St. Louis confer-
e, the three men stopped at Springfield
ere they spoke to the student body of
ncordia Theological Seminary and
tted with the faculty. In St. Louis
y had engagements at Concordia Pub-
ing House, Concordia Seminary where
y were given a dinner reception, and

Lutheran Building where they par-
ticipated in a meeting of the Board for
ropean Affairs.

Six Speeches In One Day

After the week-long Lutheran Hour
ference in St. Louis, Mr. Smith ac-
pted an invitation from First Lutheran
urch in Omaha, Nebraska, a congrega-
ion of some 2,500 members. Here the
nglish layman spoke on Sunday, 26
ovember, about the ELCE at three
urch services, twice to the Sunday
hool, and to the Adult Bible Class,
d was presented with cheques from
rious First Lutheran groups amounting
\$573. A layman of the congregation
so offered to provide altar furnishings
r one of the new ELCE churches.

After the special Convocation of Con-
rdia Teachers College at Seward where
as given the Distinguished Service
ward, Mr. Smith had an interview with
e Governor of the State of Nebraska.
The Governor kindly made me Hon. Ad-
iral of the Fleet of Nebraska." Mr.
mith smiled, "but until water follows,
e rank doesn't carry much authority."

Film Discussion in Hollywood

To discuss European distribution with
ligious film makers, the manager of
ondon's Concordia Films flew out to Los
angeles where he visited studios and
management.

"America isn't that much different from
England," Mr. Smith summed up on his
eturn on Monday, 4 December. "Walk-
ng along Fifth Avenue in New York is
much the same as going about your busi-

ness in Oxford Street. What did impress
me was Lutheran churches, Lutheran
churches everywhere—and full!"

LWL PROJECTS COMPLETED

After only seven months, the Lutheran
Women's League have completed their
1961 projects. "Mite Box" offerings have
already made possible the purchase of the
cooker for Westfield House, Cambridge,
and the gift of £50 to the Bleckmar Mis-
sion in South Africa. According to the
1961 Convention resolution, additional
collections may be used for the purchase
of a set of chancel furnishings to be made
available for loan to new ELCE missions.

The Executive Committee has pub-
lished a "Mite Box Dedication Rite" for
use in local guilds when mite boxes are
brought to be opened.

NEWCASTLE POLES INVITE

The first inter-church contact in the
North between the Polish Lutheran
Church in England and the ELCE took
place in Newcastle-on-Tyne on Saturday,
28 October, when Pastor Floyd Bosch and
three members of St. Timothy's, Sunder-
land, were guests of Pastor T. Stoy and
his Polish Lutheran congregation. The
meeting was held at the Danish Seamen's
Mission, Jesmond near Newcastle, where
the Polish congregation worships. The
Sunderland pastor described English
Lutheran work in Great Britain; Mr.
Ronald Woolston, Chairman of St.
Timothy's, reported on the work of his
congregation in Sunderland; and Miss
Alma Coulton, President of St. Timothy's
Lutheran Women's League, on the ac-
tivity of the League. Both groups ex-
pressed the desire for further and closer
contact.

KOONIBBA ACKNOWLEDGES GIFT

A recent letter from the Rev. C. V.
Eckermann, Superintendent of the Koo-
nibba Aboriginal Mission in Australia, to
Mr. Alfred Flemming, former ELCE
Treasurer, acknowledges receipt of £300
given by ELCE congregations as their
1960 Foreign Mission Offering. Super-
intendent Eckermann wrote that the
Mission has now a congregation of over
700 souls, a fine church, a children's
home, a Christian Day School with 105
pupils, a hospital, a recreational hall, and

a 20,000-acre farm. "Please convey our gratitude to the brethren," he asked. "We thank God for this evidence of your fellowship in the Gospel".

A CITY DIVIDED

"Try to imagine London divided by a huge wall, running up Oxford Street, so that no matter which side road you took to cross it, you would be stopped by the wall, and coils of barbed wire, and on the other side, a "death strip" and more barbed wire and armed police—this is Berlin today", Dr. E. G. Pearce stated after his return from the Continent on Tuesday, 5 December. "The Wall divides our church, even single congregations—members in East Berlin cannot attend their church in the West Sector, and, of course, their pastor cannot visit them. Not until you actually stand in East Berlin, in the shadow of the Wall," Pastor

Pearce said, "do you realise what really means." One of the purposes of the Berlin trip was to explore the invitation to hold the Third European Missions Conference in West Berlin in September 1962.

Previous to the two-day Berlin visit, Pastor Pearce attended the Pastoral Conference of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany at Allendorf in Giessen from 28-30 November, where he spoke on "Premises of the ELCE approach to the Unchurched". With the Home Missions Committee of the German church, he discussed evangelistic methods, successful in England, which might be used in Germany.

With Pastor F. Kreiss, President of the Evangelical Lutheran Church—Synod of France and Belgium, Pastor Pearce visited pastors and congregations in Brussels, Antwerp, and Dunkirk.

Our churches in the New

Reprinted from The Lutheran Layman, St. Louis, 1st December

THREE WISE MEN FROM EUROPE

Three Wise Men! Those three Lutheran Hour branch office managers from Europe . . . wise in the ways of radio evangelism . . . wise in the opportunities for our church in their respective areas . . . and "wise unto salvation." Each of the three men has the attributes in manner and speech which one might expect from a representative of England, France, and Germany. Eric Smith is an Englishman through and through, yet with a good dash of the American genius for promotion thrown in. "You've kept me so busy I haven't had a chance to form an opinion of your country," he told us. But he did say that in England with a population of 50 million, more than 45 million have no formal connection with any church. And *The Lutheran Hour* is doing much to reach them! Pastor Bernard Galicher charmed every person he met with his accent (the girls in the office called it cute) and with his suave manner and elaborate gestures. His greatest impression of America: "There

are so many churches, and they are active." He noted that in France which is largely Roman Catholic, but in Protestantism only, less than six per cent. of the population attends church. Pastor Hans-L. Poetsch is one of the up and coming young pastors of the Lutheran Church who has an excellent view of opportunities to witness in the community and to the German people via radio. "Germany is a land of limited possibilities," he said, "but America is a land of unlimited impossibilities." He noted that the attendance in West German Protestant churches is now less than four per cent. He opined that prosperous West Germany is no longer in need of financial support for its churches, but badly in need of prayer and moral support.

They spoke different languages . . . they held different views on various techniques of church work . . . they had varying opinions about life in the United States. . . but they all agreed on the urgent necessity of preaching the Gospel.